

This Page Is Inserted by IFW Operations  
and is not a part of the Official Record

## **BEST AVAILABLE IMAGES**

Defective images within this document are accurate representations of the original documents submitted by the applicant.

Defects in the images may include (but are not limited to):

- BLACK BORDERS
- TEXT CUT OFF AT TOP, BOTTOM OR SIDES
- FADED TEXT
- ILLEGIBLE TEXT
- SKEWED/SLANTED IMAGES
- COLORED PHOTOS
- BLACK OR VERY BLACK AND WHITE DARK PHOTOS
- GRAY SCALE DOCUMENTS

**IMAGES ARE BEST AVAILABLE COPY.**

**As rescanning documents *will not* correct images,  
please do not report the images to the  
Image Problem Mailbox.**

**Amendment To The Claims:**

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Canceled)
2. (Currently Amended) The arrangement according to Claim 38 1, wherein the reaction vessels are arranged on a microtitre plate.
3. (Canceled)
4. (Currently Amended) The arrangement according to Claim 38 3, wherein the positive-fit connection is designed such that when the individual closure element is inserted in the socket, a slight lateral displacement of the individual closure device in the socket is permitted.
5. (Original) The arrangement according to Claim 4, wherein the positive-fit connection is a bayonet closure element.
6. (Original) The arrangement according to Claim 5, wherein the positive-fit connection comprises a tenon part arranged at the individual closure element and the link section of the positive-fit connection is arranged at the closure carrier.
7. (Original) The arrangement according to Claim 6, wherein the positive-fit connection is a bayonet closure element, capable of actuation in both directions of rotation, and comprises a latch element which can be overcome.
8. (Currently Amended) The arrangement according to Claim 38 3, wherein the positive-fit connection is a quick screw connection.
9. (Currently Amended) The arrangement according to Claim 38 3, wherein the positive-fit connection is a snap connection.
10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) The arrangement according to Claims 38 4, wherein the individual closure elements comprises a closure handling device for engaging an actuation tool which serves to handle a single individual closure element.
12. (Original) The arrangement according to Claim 11, wherein the closure handling device is a positive-fit element, to which an appropriate positive-fit element on the actuation tool corresponds.
13. (Original) The arrangement according to Claim 12, wherein the closure handling device comprises a link part, and the positive-fit connection element at the actuation tool comprises a tenon part, of a bayonet closure device.
14. (Original) The arrangement according to Claim 13, wherein the bayonet closure after establishment of the bayonet closure engagement, a rotation of the individual closure element inserted in the socket is permitted in both directions of rotation.
15. (Original) The arrangement according to Claim 11, wherein the closure handling device comprises a quick screw connection.
16. (Original) The arrangement according to Claim 11, wherein the closure handling device comprises a snap connection.
17. (Original) The arrangement according to Claim 11, comprises the closure handling device comprises a non-positive fit element, to which a corresponding non-positive fit element on the actuation tool corresponds.
18. (Currently Amended) The arrangement according to Claim 38 3, wherein the positive-fit closure connection or non-positive fit connection is arranged on the outside at the actuating ~~actuation~~ section of the individual closure element and the closure handling device is arranged on the interior at the individual closure element.
19. (Currently Amended) The arrangement according to Claim 38 4, wherein the closure section of the individual closure element overlaps the reaction vessel.
20. (Currently Amended) The arrangement according to Claim 38 4, wherein the

closure section of the individual closure element enters into the reaction vessel to form a plug.

21. (Currently Amended) The arrangement according to Claim 38 ~~1~~, wherein the closure section comprises a camber facing downwards.

22. (Currently Amended) The arrangement according to Claim 38 ~~1~~, wherein the closure section comprises a membrane section which can be penetrated.

23. (Currently Amended) The arrangement according to Claim 38 ~~1~~, wherein the actuating ~~securing~~ section of the individual closure element consists of a relatively hard, rigid plastic material, and the closure section is a material fit therewith and consists of a relatively soft rubber-elastic plastic material.

24. (Currently Amended) The arrangement of Claim 23, wherein the soft rubber-elastic plastic material is a thermoplastic ~~thermoplastic~~ elastomer.

25. (Currently Amended) The arrangement according to Claim 23, wherein the actuating ~~securing~~ section comprises a central passage point, which extends as far as the closure section.

26. (Currently Amended) The arrangement according to Claim 38 ~~1~~, wherein the individual closure elements and the closure carrier consist of relatively hard, rigid plastic material.

27. (Withdrawn) A closure carrier comprising individual closure elements for an arrangement one socket each for an actuation section of an individual closure element for securing the individual closure element to the closure carrier, wherein the formation of the sockets as positive-fit elements of a positive-fit connection or as a non-positive fit element of a non-positive fit connection.

28. (Withdrawn) The closure carrier according to Claim 27, wherein the positive-fit connection is designed such that when the individual closure element is inserted in the socket, a slight lateral displacement of the individual closure device in the socket is permitted.

29. (Withdrawn) The closure carrier according to Claim 28, wherein the positive-fit connection is a bayonet closure element.
30. (Withdrawn) The closure carrier according to Claim 29, wherein the positive-fit connection comprises a tenon part arranged at the individual closure element and the link section of the positive-fit connection is arranged at the closure carrier.
31. (Withdrawn) The closure carrier according to Claim 30, wherein the positive-fit connection is a bayonet closure element, capable of actuation in both directions of rotation, and comprises a latch element which can be overcome.
32. (Withdrawn) The closure carrier according to Claim 27, wherein the positive-fit connection is a quick screw connection.
33. (Withdrawn) The closure carrier according to Claim 27, wherein the positive-fit connection is a snap connection.
34. (Withdrawn) An individual closure element for a reaction vessel of an arrangement for the contamination-free processing of reaction sequences, comprising a closure section for the seal-tight closure of an aperture of a reaction vessel allocated thereto, and an actuation section for the engagement and handling of an individual closure element, wherein the actuation section is a positive-fit closure element of a positive-fit connection or a non-positive closure element of a non-positive connection.
35. (Withdrawn) A storage and dispensing arrangement for individual closure elements for an arrangement for the contamination-free processing of reaction sequences, comprising an individual closure element having a positive-fit formation at an actuation section, wherein the positive-fit formation at the actuation section of the individual closure element interacts with a positive-fit formation at the storage and dispensing arrangement in such a way that the individual closure elements can be issued in a predetermined and specific lateral direction from the storage and dispensing arrangement.
36. (Canceled)

37. (Currently Amended) The arrangement according to Claim 38 ~~40~~, wherein the positive-fit closure connection or non-positive fit connection is arranged on the outside at the actuating ~~actuation~~ section of the individual closure element and the closure handling device is arranged on the interior at the individual closure element.

38. (New) An arrangement for the contamination-free processing of reaction sequences comprising:

- at least two reaction vessels arranged next to one another and connected to one another in a plate or strip, each reaction vessel having an open access aperture at the top,

- a closure carrier placed on top of the plate or strip and covering all the reaction vessels or groups of at least two reaction vessels, the closure carrier comprising an access opening for each one of the reaction vessels that are covered therewith, each access opening being aligned with the access aperture of the corresponding reaction vessel below the closure carrier,

- an individual closure element per reaction vessel, comprising:

- a closure section tightly scaling the access aperture of the corresponding reaction vessel, and

- an actuating section above the closure section for manipulating the individual closure element, the actuating section being positioned within the corresponding access opening of the closure carrier,

- wherein the lateral measures of the access opening of the closure carrier are larger than the lateral measures of the closure section of the individual closure element, whereby the closure sections of the individual closure elements are capable of being moved through the access openings in the closure carrier in both directions, wherein each access opening of the closure carrier is designed as a socket and the actuating section of the corresponding individual closure element is designed as a plug to fit into the socket realizing a releasable positive-fit connection between the actuating section of the socket, whereby the individual closure elements are secured to

the closure carrier in such a way that the individual closure elements when secured to the closure carrier can be placed onto the reaction vessels altogether such as to seal the reaction vessels, and can be drawn off them altogether together with the closure carrier, and further

wherein the individual closure elements are secured to the closure carrier in such a way that, with the closure carrier staying on the plate or strip, each individual closure element can be individually removed from the closure carrier and from the corresponding reaction vessel allowing a direct access to the reaction vessel through the then open access opening.